



**Commission on  
Fire Accreditation  
International**

# **Re-Accreditation Report**

**Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department  
1801 Q Street  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508  
United States of America**

**This report was prepared on February 18, 2014  
by the  
Commission on Fire Accreditation International  
for the  
Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department**

**This report represents the findings  
of the peer assessment team that visited the  
Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department  
on January 26 – 30, 2014**

**Peer Assessment Team  
James White, Team Leader  
Holger Durre, Peer Assessor  
Samuel Pena, Peer Assessor  
Maria Ratliff, Peer Assessor**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE REVIEW.....	3
CONCLUSIONS.....	10
RECOMMENDATIONS .....	11
OBSERVATIONS .....	16
Category I — Governance and Administration .....	16
Category II — Assessment and Planning .....	16
Category III — Goals and Objectives.....	19
Category IV — Financial Resources .....	20
Category V — Programs.....	21
Criterion 5A – Fire Suppression .....	21
Criterion 5B – Fire Prevention / Life Safety Program.....	24
Criterion 5C – Public Education Program .....	25
Criterion 5D – Fire Investigation Program .....	26
Criterion 5E – Technical Rescue .....	27
Criterion 5F – Hazardous Materials (Hazmat).....	29
Criterion 5G – Emergency Medical Services .....	32
Criterion 5H – Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response .....	34
Category VI — Physical Resources.....	35
Category VII — Human Resources .....	37
Category VIII — Training and Competency .....	40
Category IX — Essential Resources.....	41
Criterion 9A – Water Supply .....	41
Criterion 9B – Communication Systems .....	42

Criterion 9C – Administrative Support Services and Office Systems .....	43
Category X — External Systems Relationships .....	43

## EXHIBITS

Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department Organizational Chart

Summary Rating Sheet (For Commission Use Only)

# EXECUTIVE REVIEW

## PREFACE

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department recently received candidate status. On October 2, 2013, the department asked the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) for a site visit to determine if it could be recommended for re-accreditation. On October 15, 2013, the CFAI appointed a peer assessment team. The peer team leader approved the department's documents for site visit on December 6, 2013. The peer assessment team conducted an onsite visit of the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department on January 26-30, 2014.

In preparation for the onsite visit, each team member was provided access and reviewed the self-assessment manual, standards of cover (SOC), community risk analysis and strategic plan posted by the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department on the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) SharePoint site. This documentation represented a significant effort by the staff of the department and other community agencies. The department did not use a consultant to assist it with completing the documents required for accreditation.

## SUMMARY

The CFAI has completed a comprehensive review and appraisal of the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department based upon the eighth edition of the *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*. The commission's goals are to promote organizational self-improvement and to award accreditation status in recognition of good performance. The peer assessment team's objectives were to validate the department's self-assessment study, identify and make recommendations for improvement, issue a report of findings and conclude if the department is eligible for an award of accreditation.

The peer assessment team followed CFAI processes and the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department demonstrated that its self-study accreditation manual, community risk analysis, SOC and strategic plan met all core competencies and criteria. The peer assessment team recommends re-accredited agency status for the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

Lincoln is the capital of the state of Nebraska with a population of 262,341 according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010 data). The city has a historic and vibrant downtown core with numerous office and residential buildings and is the home of the University of Nebraska. The city limits of Lincoln encompass most of Lancaster County, offering the region a diverse blend of residential, commercial, industrial, and government properties. As a community, Lincoln residents strongly support their local government services including those provided by the fire department.

The department operates within a strong mayor-council form of municipal government. The fire chief is an at-will position that is appointed by the mayor and reports to the public safety director and serves as one of the city's key department leaders. At present the lines of communications are many with numerous meetings, committees as well as other forms of electronic communication. Feedback from the community was found in the form of surveys and forums where the fire chief and other key staff listen to resident's issues. A clear organizational model offers firefighters a clear and open line

of communication to address issues and remain connected. The department produces numerous reports detailing the level of services provided.

The department's success in meeting expectations is strongly tied to integrated processes for its standards of cover (SOC) and department's strategic plan. The department's SOC processes have evolved, and appropriate adjustments have been made, through the implementation of necessary improvements, to match available resources to the fire and non-fire risks and related expectations in the community. The SOC identifies the entire city has a metro density population with pockets of suburban density and limited rural areas at the outer fringes. There are appropriate benchmark goals and actual baseline performance statements in place that identify and measure all components of the total response time continuum.

Following a detailed assessment and analysis, the peer assessment team believes by consensus that the alarm handling time, turnout time and the travel time for the first-due and effective response force components of the total response time continuum, as identified in the standards of cover, are in line with the industry best practices identified in the eighth edition of the *FESSAM* and do not constitute a gross deviation. It is clear the department is committed to taking steps to meet the expectations.

The department has made a concerted effort over the last five years to improve its baseline performance times in the areas of alarm handling and firefighter turnout times. A staff reorganization plan has reduced from two to one the number of battalion chiefs on duty each day. The void in command staffing has been filled with the addition of one emergency medical services (EMS) supervisor and one captain serving as an incident command technician (ICT).

A fire station relocation plan has been initiated. The peer team was briefed on the current plans to relocate two fire stations to optimum locations followed by two additional new fire stations to the department. Operational plans also include the possible relocation of currently staffed units to help further reduce travel times. All aspects of the relocation plan are supported by the department's standard of cover data and performance.

The department utilized the CFAI technical advisor program to conduct a community driven strategic plan process in 2008. This strategic plan was reviewed and updated to the current plan by the department in October, 2013. The process involved an appropriate mix of internal and external stakeholders. The department's practice is to update its strategic plan on an annual basis and complete a total refresh of the document every five years. The plan created goals and objectives using a model that evaluated the department's strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results. This new direction created a better and more positive review of the department's past performance and the community's desires for the future.

In 2013, Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department completed its second community driven strategic plan. The plan includes the organization's mission statement, core values, core services, strategic goals and objectives, and long and short term operational goals. The development process included both internal and external stakeholder input via focus groups, an assessment of the accomplishments of the previous strategic plan, an assessment of the contemporary needs of the organization and the community, and an inclusion of goals set forth in the city of Lincoln's performance based budgeting model. The department has also instituted a formal process for program review.

The department is clearly committed to strategic planning, appropriate goal setting, and data driven decision making. Objectives are defined and published. The strategic objectives address issues such

as the consistency of internal and external messaging, the improvement of employee training and educational opportunities, and enhancement of the public education and fire prevention program.

A thorough review of the department's articulated goals reveals several output measures as well as a number of response time measures, but an insufficient number of outcome based measures to allow for a comprehensive evaluation of program success. There is also a deficit with regard to the use of an organizational management process to implement and track the agency's goals and objectives.

The city of Lincoln has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (Certificate) from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for their Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

Financial planning for the fire department is overseen by the city's finance department. The city creates a biennial budget in accordance with city charter. Budget policies and processes for development of the city budget and the fire department budget have a multi-tiered, clearly defined set of guidelines. Guidelines pertaining to the formation and submittal processes are established by the mayor and city council. Department budget allocations are determined by the finance department and rely on general fund revenue projections, debt services expenditures, and allocations dedicated to the capital improvement plan (CIP). The fire department is provided with latitude in regard to the use of its general fund allocation for operational expenses.

In these determinations, the strategic plan, as well as any published short term operational goals, is used as the driving factor(s) in decision making. Additionally, division heads, program managers, committee chairs, and station house captains participate actively in the internal budgeting process through dialogue and formal, specific budget requests. The department provides advanced life support (ALS) EMS response, including patient transport. Revenue generated from this service does not enter the general fund, but instead is committed to an enterprise fund that supports the operational and capital expenses of the EMS division.

The department provides a wide range of emergency response programs, including fire suppression, technical rescue, hazardous materials, and emergency medical services which are designed to meet the goals, objectives and vision of the department and the needs of the community. The city is growing and the department is planning and making changes to match the growth with the service demands. Additional stations are planned to maintain both resident and firefighter safety.

The department has adopted and follows the expectations of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The passport accountability system is utilized on multi-unit responses. The department completes a comprehensive review of all standard operating guidelines related to the programs on an annual basis. The department appraises the effectiveness of all of its programs on an annual basis.

The city is a partner to the Lancaster County Local Emergency Operations Plan. The department participates in planning as well as preparedness exercises. The plan documents state the city of Lincoln is responsible for the welfare of the residents of the city with the county serving in a support role. Full scale exercises are needed and seen as an opportunity to further prepare all first responders in the region. It was confirmed that the city is adequately prepared to address those identified threats to the Lincoln community.

The department maintains 14 fire stations, one of which houses the administrative headquarters and one that houses the backup 911 center, a maintenance facility and a storage warehouse to assist the organization in meeting its deployment and administrative objectives. Frontline staffed apparatus consist of 14 engines, 4 companies and 1 hazardous materials response unit. The department is also responsible for maintaining various support vehicles and an aging reserve fleet.

The department has approved plans in place to address its current frontline response apparatus deployment practices to address specific opportunities for improvement identified during the development of its standards of cover. The department operates well developed maintenance and supply systems to ensure a constant state of readiness for emergency response.

The Municipal Services Center (MSC) houses the vehicle maintenance and repair facility, self-contained breathing apparatus maintenance shop, EMS supply, personal protective equipment supply, training division, and serves as the indoor technical training facility. Storage for the fire prevention bureau and the urban search and rescue team are also located at the MSC. In addition, the MSC also houses the EMS and ambulance services administration/billing facilities.

The department has its own internal human resource program which is supervised by an assigned battalion chief. While the city and the department place a strong emphasis on achieving a positive employee climate, a number of gaps exist in the implementation of several key programs. The department has struggled to address an identified diversity issues within the firefighter ranks and have made efforts to recruit from identified protected classes of candidates.

Risk management is seen as a collaborative effort with the city risk manager assisting the battalion chief with the implementation of the city's risk related policies. Safety and wellness committees consisting of department personnel work regularly to address issues. Promotional processes meet labor contract requirements.

The department is proactive in addressing work place safety and occupational exposure prevention. The department also promotes physical fitness; all members have access to physical fitness equipment.

The department operates a comprehensive training program that includes initial training and continuing education. The division is staffed with one battalion chief, three captains and one administrative aide. Three geographically dispersed training facilities are available for the department to utilize. Adjunct instructors, comprised of online personnel, are utilized during periods of high demand such as during training academies. The training infrastructure is aging and it is recommended that the department develop a long-term capital strategy to address this issue. In addition, the department's approach to company and multi-company performance evaluation should be codified to allow for measurement of the training division's initiatives.

Virtually all built up areas of the city, with the exception of the rural areas at its outer fringe, are served by a well-developed and maintained water system. The department has access to water tankers through a formalized mutual aid agreement to support incidents on major thoroughfares and outlying sparsely populated areas of the city that do not yet have hydrant supported fire protection.

Dispatching and communications are provided by the emergency communications center under the management and supervision of the public safety director. Technical direction is provided to the

emergency communications center through a user's group of representatives from the primary jurisdiction's fire rescue and law enforcement agency.

The communications center is a quality facility with contemporary and appropriate equipment. The center has multiple redundant communications and power back up systems including a standalone and off site secondary dispatch facility, which is tested for 24 hours on a quarterly basis.

The department provides most of its own administrative services via civilian personnel, but does access some support from the city and the University of Nebraska for information technology projects. Additionally, the administrative staff is occasionally augmented by emergency services personnel temporarily reassigned to fulfill a project assignment.

In 2011, the department underwent an organizational restructuring which assigned command level staff to administrative roles, utilizing an administrative schedule. As a result of this reorganization a significant and appropriate amount of full-time administrative support was incorporated into the department.

The department clearly sees the benefits to continued exploration and participation in a wide-range of external relationships. The department shares capabilities with other jurisdictions local in the Lincoln area through well managed mutual aid agreements, and around the world, as the sponsoring agency for Nebraska Task Force 1, a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urban search and rescue team. The department continues to explore opportunities to expand the external relationships which involve emergency medical services and technical education and training.

The peer assessment team identified several opportunities for improvement that are captured in the recommendations section and in the observations and performance section of the report. These recommendations followed discussions, interviews and a detailed review of department supplied documentation to support its self-assessment conclusions. The department, as well as the director of public safety, demonstrated a strong desire to review and implement plans to address those opportunities for improvement found in this report.

This assessment represented the fourth peer review process for the department. The peer assessment team observed a strong commitment by the department to the CFAI accreditation process and, in particular, to ensuring appropriate succession training for the accreditation manager position.

The current accreditation manager has several support personnel as well other department specialists who help with components of the process. Several members of the department are trained to act as peer assessors for CFAI. These approaches ensure continuity, more direct access to best practices with other similar organizations and the engagement of a broader spectrum of the department.

The peer assessment team had meetings with the public safety director, the general manager of community safety and protective services. Individually and collectively they expressed a long standing interest in the process, having been engaged and involved with the department's continued use of the accreditation process as their primary management tool. There is clearly a commitment to continue to follow and support the implementation of identified opportunities for improvement. It can be anticipated that all representatives will be strong supporters and network participants as the full benefits of going through the self-assessment process are realized and built on in the future.



## **Composition**

When Nebraska became a state in 1867, a new state capitol was needed. The original territorial capitol was in Omaha, on the eastern part of the state. Omaha was a growing city along the Missouri river and was the headquarters of the newly formed Union Pacific Railroad. With much debate, the capitol was moved to Lincoln, a more centralized location within the state. Lincoln began to grow rapidly, both in population and size. Contributing to this growth was the development of five separate railroads passing through the city and, over the years, these rail companies brought in thousands of immigrants. With the rapid growth, the city recognized a need for fire protection.

Originally, volunteer fire companies sprang up; these companies operated out of livery stables and purchased the first of three steamers used by Lincoln. These volunteer companies survived a few years then disbanded, usually from a lack of financial support. By 1885, the citizens of Lincoln realized the need for a full-time, paid fire department. On January 4th, 1886, Mayor H. C. Burr organized the Lincoln Fire Department.

The department serves a diverse population for both fire and non-fire risk. Even though Lincoln hosts many of the same residential and commercial risks as any other community, the University of Nebraska campus helps the city swell, and caused the stadium on game days to become the third largest community in the state on football Saturdays in the fall, growing the city of Lincoln's population by over 90,000 people. As a result of these special events, the university has worked with the department and adopted components of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), creating incident action plans to help manage the risk. While the city's population density does not meet the calculations of an urban environment, the department used CFAI's methodology for a metro-urban size community.

The most recent census data indicates Lincoln had a population of 262,341 and when including all of Lancaster County, the population rises to 293,407. The department also provides fire services to several unincorporated areas of the county through specific mutual aid agreements. A majority of the service calls for these areas are related to providing advance life support, ambulance transportation, technical rescue, or hazardous materials incident support. These responses total approximately seven hundred each year.

Lincoln is located in the central region of the state and has earned a reputation as one of the Midwest's most beloved cities. Home to fine culinary and artistic treasures, a budding live music scene, breath-taking parks, golf courses and trails, and friendly people; Lincoln offers the exhilaration of a big city and the serenity of the countryside and has been identified as one of the fastest growing metro areas in the Midwest.

The department responded to a total of 21,179 emergencies in 2012 including: 2,039 fire calls; 16,188 emergency medical service (EMS) calls; and 2,952 miscellaneous calls. The department has managed the steady population growth of the area; it is serviced by a minimum staff of 78 and maximum staff of 90 uniformed personnel on a daily basis working out of 14 fire stations. In November 2001, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) rated the city to its current public protection classification of 3.

## **Government**

Mayor-Council form of government  
Mayor and 7 Councilors  
Fire Chief

## **Fire Department**

14 fire stations  
302 Full-Time Employees  
3 shift system (24/24/8 schedule)

### **Staffed Resources**

14 engine companies  
4 truck companies  
6 medic units  
1 battalion  
1 emergency medical services supervisor  
1 hazardous materials vehicle

### **Cross-staffed Resources**

1 mobile air unit

### **Non-staffed units**

5 reserve medic units  
4 specialty trailers  
1 fire safety education house  
7 reserve apparatus  
2 snow plows  
19 support vehicles  
4 bicycles  
1 special events all-terrain vehicle

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The self-study manual produced by the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department was of high quality. The manual represented a significant effort by the staff of the department to produce and present a quality document.

- The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department demonstrated that all core competencies were met and received a credible rating.
- The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department demonstrated that all applicable criteria were met and received a credible rating.
- The peer assessment team recommends re-accredited agency status for the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The peer assessment team conducted an exit interview with the agency consisting of the director of public safety, the fire chief and most all of the staff that participated in the self-assessment study. The purpose of the meeting was to review the team's findings and recommendations. The department was given an opportunity to respond to any errors in findings of fact.

### **Strategic Recommendations**

Strategic recommendations were developed from information gathered from the onsite assessment visit and the evaluation of the criteria and core competencies.

### **Category II – Assessment and Planning**

#### **Criterion 2A: Documentation of Area Characteristics**

Core Competency

2A.3 The agency analyzes the community by service area/population density for the purposes of developing total response time standards.

It is recommended that the department use the community population density levels found in their risk assessment data and standards of cover to evaluate their total response time standard.

### **Category III – Goals and Objectives**

#### **Criterion 3A: Goals and Objectives**

Core Competency

3A.1 The agency publishes general organizational goals directed toward achieving the agency's long-range plans. Corresponding specific objectives are published to implement these goals and incorporate the measurable elements of time, quantity, and quality.

It is recommended that the department associate outcome measures inclusive of the elements of time and quality with each strategic or long-range goal or objective.

#### **Criterion 3B: Implementation of Goals and Objectives**

Core Competency

3B.1 Some form of organizational management process is identified and used to implement and track the agency's goals and objectives.

It is recommended that the department formalize a management process to track the implementation of the agency's goals and objectives.

## **Category V – Programs**

### **Criterion 5A: Fire Suppression**

#### Criterion Statement

5A The agency operates an adequate, effective, and efficient fire suppression program directed toward controlling and/or extinguishing fires for the purposes of protecting people from injury or death, and reducing property loss.

It is recommended that the department continue to monitor the assignment of only one battalion chief officer on duty at any one time.

### **Criterion 5B: Fire Prevention/Life Safety Program**

#### Criterion Statement

5B The agency operates an adequate, effective, and efficient program directed toward fire prevention, life safety, hazard risk reduction, the detection, reporting, and control of fires and other emergencies, the provision of occupant safety and exiting and the provisions for first aid firefighting equipment.

It is recommended that the department evaluate the current organizational deployment model for the fire prevention staff and consider assigning fire prevention staff to the fire department.

### **Criterion 5E: Technical Rescue**

#### Core Competencies

5E.4 Current standard operating procedures or general guidelines are in place to accomplish the stated level of response for technical rescue incidents.

It is recommended that the department enhance its existing processes to more formally track and document the updating of standard operating guidelines for its technical rescue program.

5E.7 An appraisal is conducted, at least annually, to determine the effectiveness of the technical rescue program.

It is recommended that the department obtain access to the records management system data to efficiently and effectively document and analyze the technical rescue program.

### **Criterion 5F: Hazardous Materials (Hazmat)**

#### Core Competency

5F.1 Given the agency's standards of cover and emergency deployment objectives, the agency meets its staffing, response time, apparatus and equipment deployment objectives for each type and magnitude of hazardous materials emergency incidents.

It is recommended that the department consider implementing a daily minimum staffing requirement for hazmat technician-level trained personnel.

## **Criterion 5G: Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

### **Core Competency**

5G.6 A patient care record is created and maintained for each patient encountered by the EMS system. This report contains patient history, incident history, data regarding treatment rendered, and the patient disposition recorded. The agency must make reasonable efforts to protect reports from public access and maintain them as per local and state/provincial records retention requirements.

It is recommended that the department consider the integration of a computerized patient care reporting (PCR) system with the intent of improving the quality assurance program and the inclusion of all patient care information from other responding companies.

## **Category VI- Physical Resources**

### **Criterion 6D: Apparatus Maintenance**

### **Core Competency**

6D.5 Current standard operating procedures or general guidelines are in place to direct the apparatus maintenance program.

It is recommended that the department review the most recent edition of the *NFPA 1911: Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus* for possible adoption and or revisions to its current fleet policies and procedures.

## **Category VIII – Training and Competency**

### **Criterion 8B: Training and Education Program Performance**

### **Core Competency**

8B.4 The agency provides for evaluation of individual, company, or crew, and multi company or crew performance through performance-based measurements.

It is recommended that the department develop a more robust company and multi-company, performance based evaluation program.

### **Criterion 8C Training and Education Resources**

### **Core Competency**

8C.1 Available training facilities and apparatus are provided to support the training needs of the agency.

It is recommended that the department evaluate the long-term needs for a dedicated burn building capable of conducting live burns using Class A fuels, designed to accommodate the needs of a growing organization.

## **Specific Recommendations**

Specific recommendations were developed from the appraisal of performance indicators in each of the ten categories.

### **Category VI – Physical Resources**

#### **Criterion 6B: Fixed Facilities**

Performance Indicator

6B.1 Each facility has adequate space for agency functions (e.g., operations, fire prevention, training, support services, administration, etc.)

It is recommended that the department's physical resources plan clearly articulate priorities for ensuring operational adequacy for existing station facilities, inclusive of equitable and adequate sleeping/restroom facilities for all personnel.

#### **Criterion 6C: Apparatus and Vehicles**

Performance Indicator

6C.3 A current replacement schedule exists for all apparatus.

It is recommended the department secure financial appropriations to implement a fire apparatus replacement schedule.

#### **Criterion 6D: Apparatus Maintenance**

Performance Indicator

6D.4 An adequate number of trained and certified maintenance personnel are available to meet the program needs.

It is recommended the department re-evaluate the staffing model for the fleet maintenance division. Plans should be made that would allow for an adequate number of trained personnel to meet all maintenance needs.

### **Category VII – Human Resources**

#### **Criterion 7B: Recruitment, Selection, Retention, and Promotion**

Performance Indicators

7B.4 The agency's workforce composition is reflective of the service area demographics or the agency has a recruitment plan to achieve the desired workforce composition.

It is recommended that a comprehensive plan be developed to help the department better represent the diversity of the city. The plan should include incumbent training, community input, and directed activities to attract and retain a more inclusive workforce.

7B.9 Exit interviews or periodic employee surveys, or other mechanisms are used to acquire feedback and improve agency policies and procedures.

It is recommended that the department develop an exit interview process to gain feedback from retiring as well as employees who voluntarily leave the department.

**Criterion 7D: Use of Human Resources**

Performance Indicator

7D.6 Career development programs are made available to all employees/members.

It is recommended that the department establish a career development program for all employees. The program should include paths for all positions explaining clearly the steps required to move from within a position and to the next level of the organization.

**Criterion 7F: Occupational Health and Safety and Risk Management**

Performance Indicator

7F.6 The agency uses near miss reporting to elevate the level of situational awareness in an effort to teach and share lessons learned from the events that, expect for a fortunate break in the chain of events, could have resulted in a fatality, injury or property damage.

It is recommended the department begin participating in the National Firefighter Near Miss Reporting System.

**Category X – External Systems Relationships**

**Criterion 10B: External Agency Agreements**

Performance Indicator

10B.3 The agency has a process by which their agreements are managed, reviewed and revised.

It is recommended that the department initiate a process to review, renew and revise their external mutual aid agreements with neighboring agencies.



## **OBSERVATIONS**

### **Category I — Governance and Administration**

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department was established and legally operates within the state of Nebraska with a strong mayor form of municipal government. The fire chief reports to the mayor through the city's public safety director. The mayor and public safety director provide scheduled opportunities to meet with the fire chief and his staff on a regular basis.

The governing body and the agency manager are legally established to provide general policies to guide the department's approved programs and services and appropriated financial resources. The department operates under the powers and authority granted in the state statutes of Nebraska, and powers are granted within the Lincoln City Charter for the mayor to operate the fire department and select the fire chief. The city operates a fire department under the direction of the mayor and his director of public safety.

The communication process between the governing body and the administrative structure of the department is robust and uses multiple methods of messaging. From live, face to face meetings to video conferencing, the line of communication within the department and with city management allows for a stronger working relationship with the department's law enforcement counterparts. Assigned battalion chiefs focus on communicating with their assigned stations and personnel as much as possible.

The established administrative structure provides an environment for achievement of the agency's mission, purposes, goals, strategies and objectives. The city assesses and approves programs and basic agency policies through reviews and audits conducted by the city's finance and human resources departments on an annual basis to ensure compliance with all applicable legal requirements. The department works closely with the city building department to assure all legal requirements related to fire and life safety codes are met as these employees are directly accountable to supervisors outside the department. The city law department assigns professional legal assistance as necessary to assist with compliance.

### **Category II — Assessment and Planning**

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department has embraced the use of the CFAI self-assessment process to logically and rationally define and align its self-assessment manual, community risk hazard analysis, standards of cover (SOC) and community-driven strategic planning. In 2008, the department used the services of the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) Technical Advisor Program to support the development of their strategic plan.

In 2013, the strategic plan was updated through the use of a similar community-driven process with the use of internal facilitation. The strategic plan is well developed and is considered when budgeting and when making critical comprehensive department wide decisions. Community feedback on the department's operation is maintained through open lines of communications between community leaders and the fire department leadership.

The department collects and analyzes data specific to the distinct characteristics of the community served and applies the findings to organizational planning.

While the department does analyze the city's service areas and population densities for the purpose of identifying risk hazards, the department has continued to choose to use the metropolitan response standard for benchmarking purposes. The peer team witnessed that certainly the downtown core of the city is metro density, but many of the areas on the fringes of the city limits are not; these areas are more urban and suburban in both population density and volume.

It is recommended that the department use the community population density levels found in their risk assessment data and standards of cover to evaluate their total response time standard. The peer team is not recommending a change in their standard, but the use of the risk assessment data to help support the current deployment model. The results of the analysis and the associated identified needs should be integrated into the SOC.

The department assesses the nature and magnitude of the hazards within its jurisdiction and develops appropriate response coverage strategies. Each significant fire and non-fire risk is categorized and listed to permit future analysis and study in determining standards of cover and related services. Special attention is paid to identify, analyze and develop strategies for non-fire or limited fire risks that gain importance due to cultural, economic, environmental or historical value.

The benchmark service level objectives incorporated into the standards of cover are based on local needs and circumstances and industry standards and best practices adopted from the: *Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*, eighth edition; *CFAI Standards of Cover*, fifth edition; *National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1221: Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems*; *NFPA 1710: Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*; Insurance Services Office (ISO); Fire Protection Research Foundation; and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

The department's comprehensive evaluation and planning process provides very detailed information related to both the fire and non-fire risks in each of its 14 planning zones. This information was used to identify responses capable of efficiently, effectively and safely addressing the risks within the current capabilities of the department's delivery system.

The department's assessment and planning process, used to develop its SOC, has considered the overall fire risk it protects, its areas of responsibility, the demographics of the city, the economic indicators influencing its ability to deliver services, the historical fire loss data, the available water supply and the use of automatic fire protection systems for certain occupancies.

The currency of the risk status is further enhanced by continuous interaction with the city of Lincoln's bureau of fire prevention. This comprehensive approach has ensured the establishment of an appropriate and effective SOC strategy for fire risks. As a result of this comprehensive risk assessment, the department was able to use the SOC data to support the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Station Optimization Plan.

In the development of the SOC, careful consideration was also given to the non-fire risks in the community. The non-fire risks include technical rescue, hazardous materials and emergency medical services.

The department has completed an analysis and evaluation of the related service demands for each of these risk types. Appropriate performance objectives are contained in the SOC relative to the response of adequate personnel within an appropriate time-frame. The SOC identifies opportunities to further develop the department's capabilities through the implementation of the Station Optimization Plan.

The key to keeping the SOC strategy effective is the department's ongoing commitment to: continually measuring the gap between benchmark and baseline times; identifying contributing factors to those gaps; and developing remedies, through appropriate recommendations, to make continuous improvements. A formal evaluation is conducted by the department's command staff on a regular basis. These assessments analyze changes in the population density; identify any significant changes in the risk; consider any changes in response capability; and assess the impact on response time standards.

The department uses data generated by its records management system and computer aided dispatch system to create reports that assist in assessing its performance system wide. The results are used to update and revise the SOC document, as needed.

The department's practice is to document alarm handling as the time interval from the receipt of the alarm at the primary public service answering point (PSAP) until the end of the transmittal of the response information via voice or electronic means to emergency response facilities or the emergency response units in the field.

Following a detailed assessment and analysis, the peer assessment team believes by consensus that the alarm handling time, turnout time and the travel time for the first-due and effective response force components of the total response time continuum, as identified in the standards of cover, are in line with the industry best practices identified in the eighth edition of the *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*.

While the overall assessment of system performance found the department within those benchmark measurements found in the *FESSAM* for a metropolitan service area, the assessment team discussed several recommendations the agency is currently considering, which if implemented, could have a positive impact on system wide performance; these included:

- Update of the fire station alerting system. While the existing system allows for the alerting of multiple fire stations, alerting any more than four stations requires additional time and forces an all call for each of the fourteen fire stations. Improved station alerting software and hardware could have a positive impact on the turn out time for all units.
- The department continues its staged implementation of automatic vehicle locator (AVL) technology for response vehicles. The assessment team was provided a demonstration of the proposed AVL system and encourages the department to continue with implementation and inclusion in the response system.
- The department should continue with the implementation of the *Pulse Point* automatic external defibrillator location program. Through the use of *Pulse Point*, AED devices are mapped and messaged to participants who can arrive and initiate citizen CPR. While this program does not reduce the total response time of department responders, it does dramatically impact non-fire (EMS) patient outcomes.

The assessment team found a well developed and managed risk assessment. A strategic plan for 2012-2017 is in place and, along with the budget, is guiding the activities of the agency. The plan is submitted to the director of public safety and the mayor.

The department had used the services of the CPSE Technical Advisor program to complete the previous strategic plan in 2008. This plan set in place the current community driven planning process that was once again used by the department in this current version of the plan. Specific individuals from both the community and the department contributed to the objectives and goals set forth in the plan. After completion, the plan was presented to the director of public safety and is used to set the financial objectives for the city.

The strategic plan contains specific goals and objectives that the department referred to as attainable. This is a change from those created as a result of the previous plan. Senior staff chief officers are assigned responsibility for the management of each specific objective. The goals in this new plan are more short term and have the focus of the community. Completion of these objectives will be critical for the department moving forward.

### **Category III — Goals and Objectives**

During the course of the previous strategic plan period (2008) the organization underwent significant change including a new fire chief and a reorganization of command staff. With the significant change in the organization, a new strategic plan was warranted. In 2013, the fire department completed its second community driven strategic plan. The plan includes the organization's mission statement, core values, core services, strategic goals and objectives, and long and short term operational goals. The development process included both internal and external stakeholder input via focus groups, an assessment of the accomplishments of the 2008 plan, an assessment of the contemporary needs of the organization and the community, and an inclusion of goals set forth in Lincoln's performance based budgeting model. Additionally, the newly appointed fire chief developed a number of goals to be included in the final draft of the strategic plan.

The strategic objectives address issues such as the consistency of internal and external messaging, the improvement of training and educational opportunities, and enhancement of the public education and fire prevention program. Performance measures associated with goals and objectives are published for public consumption on the city's website as a component of the performance based budgeting process. This provides all members of the organization as well as community members with access to the department's published goals and objectives along with some program measures.

The department has established general goals and specific objectives that direct its priorities in a manner consistent with its mission. The goals and objectives are appropriate for the community served.

The department is clearly committed to strategic planning, appropriate goal setting, and data driven decision making. Objectives are defined and published in the strategic plan and the strategic plan aligns with the city of Lincoln's overarching goals and objectives as set forth in the city plan/performance based budget goals. The department has instituted a formal process for annual program review. These annual appraisals occur for all core operational services including fire suppression, fire prevention, fire investigation, hazardous material, technical rescue, public education, and emergency medical services, is completed.

The appraisals include a description of the program, budget review, current personnel assigned, and performance analysis. However, these objectives, as well as several long and short term goals, lack articulated time-bound, quantifiable, outcome-based measures.

A thorough review of the department's articulated goals reveals several output measures as well as a number of response time measures, but an insufficient number of outcome based measures to allow for a comprehensive evaluation of program success. There is also a deficit with regard to the use of an organizational management process to implement and track the agency's goals and objectives. It is recommended that the department associate outcome measures inclusive of the elements of time and quality with each strategic or long-range goal or objective.

The department uses a defined management process to implement the goals and objectives. Operationally and administratively, the department utilizes a chain of command to manage day-to-day human and physical resources. Written management policies identify the chief as responsible for the management of all resources in order to accomplish the mission of the fire department. He provides policy direction and supervision to all chief officers.

Captains, fire apparatus operators, firefighters, and administrative staff are given responsibilities relevant to accomplishing action items as defined in the strategic plan. However, of the six strategic objectives identified in the plan, all share the same start date, with four sharing the same target completion date. These two-year implementation timelines fail to identify a structured process for implementation oversight and accountability. It is also unclear if there are prioritized action steps or objectives.

A thorough review of the department's articulated goals reveals a deficit with regard to the use of an organizational management process to implement and track the agency's goals and objectives. It is recommended that the department formalize a management process to track the implementation of the agency's goals and objectives.

Processes are in place to measure and evaluate progress towards the completion of specific objectives and overall system performance. The goals and objectives are re-examined and modified periodically.

A written management policy defines the process for the annual review of organizational goals and objectives. This policy outlines the requirements for written program appraisals and the overall review and update of departmental goals and objectives. The strategic plan, subsequently, may receive addendums if appropriate or notations pertaining to completed action items or achieved objectives.

The appraisals of the core services include a description of the program, budget review, current personnel assigned, and performance analysis. Additionally, departmental goals expressed as components of the city's performance based budget are reviewed and modified as a part of the formal budgeting process.

#### **Category IV — Financial Resources**

Financial planning for the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department is overseen by the city of Lincoln's finance department. The city creates a biennial budget in accordance with the city charter. Guidelines pertaining to the formation and submittal processes are established by the mayor and city council. Departmental budget allocations are determined by the finance department and rely on general fund

revenue projections, debt services expenditures, and allocations designated to the capital improvement plan (CIP). Additionally, the department provides advanced life support (ALS) emergency medical service (EMS) response, including patient transport. Revenue generated from this service does not enter the general fund, but instead is committed to an enterprise fund that supports the operational and capital expenses of the EMS division. Currently, this fund is substantially profitable for the department.

The department's financial planning and resource allocation processes are based on agency planning involving broad staff participation. The city of Lincoln has formally established policies, guidelines, and processes for use during the biennial budget development process. The finance director oversees periodic reviews and updates of the related documents as well as the city performance based budget dashboard.

Under the direction of the fire chief, the command staff collaborates to ensure that relevant data, documentation, and presentation material are provided to ensure compliance with budget development guidelines. The proposed budget is then presented, amended or modified as necessary, and, ultimately adopted by elected officials.

The department's financial management practices exhibit sound budgeting and control, proper recording, reporting and auditing. The peer assessment team confirmed that the city of Lincoln is in receipt of the most currently available Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (certificate) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The department has submitted its most recent GFOA certificate and CAFR as prima facie compliance with this criterion.

Financial resources are appropriately allocated to support the established organizational mission, the stated long-term plan, goals and objectives and maintain the quality of programs and services. Financial stability is a fundamental aspect of an agency's integrity. The department ensures that programs and services provided can be supported by the necessary fiscal resources using sound budgetary practices.

Balanced budget requirements are codified by the city's charter and Nebraska state statutes. The result is that all budget allocations for programs and activities are based on anticipated revenues. The biennial approved budget includes the immediate past two years of actual expenditures. The budget also includes a debt service fund used to account for the retirement of tax-supported general obligation bonds, purchases, and other financial agreements.

For contingency purposes, the budget includes a number of funds to ensure an adequate balance to the tax-reliant general fund. Additionally, the department funds its ALS patient treatment and transport service via an enterprise fund receiving all monies collected as a result of billing for the transport service.

## **Category V — Programs**

### **Criterion 5A – Fire Suppression**

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department is a full-service fire and rescue organization designed to provide essential public safety and emergency services. To meet the needs of its residents, the department currently staffs 14 engines, 4 truck companies and 6 medic units from 14 fire stations.

The pump capacity of all engines and ladders is a minimum of 1,250 gallons per minute. Two truck companies are equipped with 105 foot aerial devices and two are equipped with 75 foot aerial devices.

The department operates a 3 shift system and has established a minimum staffing benchmark of 78 firefighters per shift and a maximum of 90, per day. The department maintains a minimum of three firefighters per company on all engine and truck companies with two firefighters assigned to the medic units.

A safety officer, with the rank of captain/emergency medical services (EMS) supervisor, is assigned to each shift and is dispatched to all structure fires, any hazardous materials (hazmat) incident not able to be handled by a single company, and rescue/extrication incidents. Initially arriving company officers are tasked with assuming safety duties until the arrival of the EMS supervisor assumes the role upon arrival at the emergency.

The department operates an adequate, effective, and efficient fire suppression program directed toward controlling and or extinguishing fires for the purposes of protecting people from injury or death, and reducing property loss.

The assessment team recommends the department make a concerted effort to ensure safe and effective provision of incident command for situations involving simultaneously occurring incidents. It is recommended that the department continue to monitor the assignment of only one battalion chief officer on duty at any one time. This recommendation is made due to the recent move to change the department from a two-battalion system to an officer in charge (OIC) concept. Under the current system, multiple simultaneous incidents occurring at the same time or extended responses from the OIC could result in company officers having to provide for this function under less than ideal conditions.

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department has management policies (MP) that direct fire suppression operations at emergency incidents. The department completed a full review of these policies in 2013 and a chief officer has been assigned to specific policies to ensure that these are reviewed on an annual basis. In addition, the department has been mandated by the mayor to review and update portions of the municipal code that are relevant to the fire department.

The department uses the components of the national incident management system (NIMS) and incorporates these on all incidents involving multiple companies. The department provides training on incident command system (ICS) components and all levels of responders are competent at using the system. The department is expanding the ICS requirements to include ICS 300 and 400 for command level officers.

In 2013, the department completed an appraisal of their core operational programs. Statistics comparing two key goals and performance indicators found in the SOC were used to address other community performance programs. The reporting of these components was included in Lincoln's performance measurement program called *Taking Charge*. Managed by the mayor's office, *Taking Charge* identified the increasing call volume within the fire department where an 8% increase has been seen between 2010 and 2012. The department is currently developing suggested changes, including the proposed station location optimization program, to respond to this.

The department's response and deployment standards are based upon the metro population density and the fire demand of the community. Fourteen fire stations provide citywide coverage; department staffing is based upon station location, incident type and frequency. The targeted service level objectives in the standards of cover benchmark statements are based on industry standards and best practices, as identified earlier in this report in Category II – Assessment and Planning. The objectives have been approved and adopted by fire department management and the city council. The department's benchmark service level objectives are as follows:

For 90 percent of all structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of two firefighters and one officer shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first-due unit for all risk levels shall be capable of: providing 500 gallons of water and 1,250 gallons per minute (gpm) pumping capacity; initiating command; requesting additional resources; establishing a back-up line and advancing an attack line, each flowing a minimum of 150 gpm; establishing an uninterrupted water supply; containing the fire; rescuing at-risk victims; and performing salvage operations. These operations shall be done in accordance with departmental standard operating procedures while providing for the safety of responders and the general public.

For 90 percent of all structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the effective response force (ERF), staffed with a minimum of 19 firefighters and officers, shall be 10 minutes and 20 seconds. The ERF for all structure fires shall be capable of: establishing command; providing an uninterrupted water supply; advancing an attack line and a backup line for fire control; complying with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements of two-in and two-out; completing forcible entry; searching and rescuing at-risk victims; ventilating the structure; controlling utilities; and performing salvage and overhaul. These operations shall be done in accordance with departmental standard operating procedures while providing for the safety of responders and the general public.

The department's baseline statements reflect actual performance during 2009 to 2012. The department does not rely on the use of automatic aid mutual aid from neighboring fire departments to provide its effective response force complement of personnel. The department's actual baseline service level performance is as follows:

For 90 percent of all structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of two firefighters and one officer, is 7 minutes and 19 seconds. The first-due unit for all risk levels is capable of: providing 500 gallons of water and 1,250 gpm pumping capacity; initiating command; requesting additional resources; establishing a back-up line and advancing an attack line, each flowing a minimum of 150 gpm; establishing an uninterrupted water supply; containing the fire; rescuing at-risk victims; and performing salvage operations. These operations are done in accordance with departmental standard operating procedures while providing for the safety of responders and the general public.

For 90 percent of all structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF, staffed with a minimum of 19 firefighters and officers, is 12 minutes and 41 seconds. The ERF is capable of: establishing command; providing an uninterrupted water supply; advancing an attack line and a backup line for fire control; complying with the OSHA requirements of two-in and two-out; completing forcible entry; searching and rescuing at-risk victims; ventilating the structure; controlling utilities; and performing salvage and overhaul.



It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department demonstrated a trend of improvement in its actual baseline performance for 2009-2012.

The team also reviewed the available 2013 response time data and confirmed it is consistent with the provided information for 2009-2012.

<b>Structure Fires - 90th Percentile Times – Baseline Performance</b>		<b>2009 - 2013</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Alarm Handling</b>	Pick-up to Dispatch	:61	:61	:59	:64	:60	:59
<b>Turnout Time</b>	Turnout Time 1st Unit	1:33	1:29	1:29	1:42	1:34	1:31
<b>Travel Time</b>	Travel Time 1st Unit <b>Distribution</b>	4:27	4:27	4:45	4:15	4:27	4:13
	Travel Time ERF <b>Concentration</b>	9:53	9:48	10:30	9:30	10:22	9:01
<b>Total Response Time</b>	Total Response Time 1st Unit On Scene <b>Distribution</b>	7:19	7:21	7:22	7:35	7:17	7:03
	Total Response Time ERF <b>Concentration</b>	12:41	12:27	12:29	12:56	12:56	11:22

#### **Criterion 5B – Fire Prevention / Life Safety Program**

The department delivers comprehensive fire prevention services through the work of seven inspectors/investigators, one administrative support staff position, and one chief officer. In addition, fire suppression personnel conduct business inspections and public education activities in a coordinated fashion with fire prevention staff.

The fire prevention staff is under the management of the building and safety department rather than under the direct supervision of the fire department. The department is currently operating under the 2009 *International Fire Code* (IFC) and is in the process of adopting the 2012 IFC, as of January 2014. All fire prevention staff are trained and certified at a level commensurate with their responsibilities. Finally, these staff members also provide the city's bomb event response.

It is recommended that the department evaluate the current organizational deployment model for the fire prevention staff and consider assigning fire prevention staff to the fire department. This has the potential to result in difficulties with alignment of organizational direction and a lack of adequate training for suppression personnel.

The department operates an adequate, effective, and efficient program directed toward fire prevention, life safety, hazard risk reduction, the detection, reporting, and control of fires and other emergencies, the provision of occupant safety and exiting and the provisions for first aid firefighting equipment.

The department operates under the 2009 IFC and local amendments. This code is adopted in conjunction with the associated International Building Code series. In addition, the fire department is able to enforce the adopted National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) life safety codes through authority granted by the state of Nebraska. The current fire prevention code was adopted on June 20th, 2011.

Inspections carried out by the fire prevention division occur in occupancies required to obtain a permit to operate or occupy. Companies conduct inspections in occupancies not requiring a permit. When companies are unable to resolve an inspection violation, they are referred to the fire prevention bureau for follow up and enforcement. The department has made a concerted effort to ensure that the fire prevention bureau and the fire suppression personnel coordinate their actions with one another.

The inspectors assigned to the Bureau of Fire Prevention are adequately trained for their respective levels of responsibilities. In addition to fire inspections and investigations, each inspector is assigned different responsibilities pertaining to fire prevention, such as underground tank installation. Inspectors receive specialized training and certification in these respective areas. The agency does not require that suppression personnel become certified, and there are no minimum training requirements outlined by policy.

The department began to formally appraise each program area in 2013. The program appraisal for fire prevention developed some fundamental metrics to measure the effectiveness of the programs delivered. The department plans to expand the appraisal process for the fire prevention program in the future years.

#### **Criterion 5C – Public Education Program**

The department delivers public education in a similar manner that it carries out its fire prevention duties. The eight personnel assigned to the fire prevention bureau have specific responsibilities that include the educational programs directed at specific audiences such as the university population in the city of Lincoln. In addition, personnel assigned to fire suppression conduct station tours and other related public education demonstrations that round out the public education program.

The department targets the community with specific resources that are aligned with their respective areas of responsibilities. The fire prevention bureau focuses public education efforts on the business community and at-risk audiences while suppression personnel focus their efforts on the general public. The program is directed in part by the department's public education committee. Budget constraints have impacted this program in recent years, resulting in the elimination of several programs. The department has committed itself to regular program appraisal that will assist the agency in ensuring that any adjustment in targeted populations is possible in a responsive manner.

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department outlines its public education activities in a comprehensive set of management policies that include the specific manner in which the public can request tours and further information. The policies are aligned with the goals and objectives of the organization and support this program adequately.

The department conducted a comprehensive appraisal of its public education program in 2013. This evaluation specifically identified the effectiveness of its public education efforts and quantified the overall reduction of risk experienced by the community. The department has a plan to expand these

appraisals and to conduct them on a quarterly basis. Finally, the department has identified a two-year timeframe to further identify metrics based on the experience of industry best practices.

The department has a credible public education program in place that supports the overall goal of reducing the fire loss and injury experienced by the community. While there have been reductions in funding of education programs, the department continues to commit to delivering programs driven by community needs and expectations.

#### **Criterion 5D – Fire Investigation Program**

The department has eight dedicated fire investigators that are assigned to the bureau of fire prevention. One investigator is available every day to ensure reliable response to conduct investigations of all reported fires within the city. The fire investigators work with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and State Fire Marshal's office to ensure that a comprehensive investigation takes place even in complex incidents. In addition, investigators are able to transfer cases to the police department for prosecution of incidents that are incendiary in nature.

The department operates an adequate, effective and efficient program directed toward origin and cause investigation and determination for fires, explosions, and other emergency situations that endanger life or property. The *2012 International Fire Code* authorizes the department's fire investigation program. The code establishes the authority to investigate the origin and cause of any fire or explosion. Investigation authority is further delegated to the city of Lincoln, by the Nebraska State Fire Marshal's Office.

The department conducts investigations using the scientific method as outlined in *National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 921: Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations, 2011 edition*. This expectation is outlined in management policies that support these efforts.

The bureau of fire prevention has eight trained investigators that allow the department to adequately conduct effective fire cause investigations. All fire investigators are qualified to the *NFPA 1033: Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator*. The department has committed itself to assessing the adequacy of this staffing level on an annual basis.

The department has a policy in place that describes the expectations of fire investigators and agency personnel pertaining to fire investigations. In addition, NFPA 921 is used to support this policy. These documents are used as guidelines to outline the manner in which fire investigations are to be conducted including in which cases other agencies, such as the state fire marshal's office are to be involved.

The department has committed itself to full annual appraisals of all major program areas, fire investigations being one of these. In addition to these appraisals, the fire prevention bureau analyzes origin and cause as part of the annual budgeting process. The chief of the bureau of fire prevention conducts ongoing monitoring of the investigation activity to monitor for trends and compliance with policy.

### **Criterion 5E – Technical Rescue**

Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department provides a wide range of technical rescue programs to its residents including, but not limited to: vehicle entrapment, urban search and rescue, high angle, surface ice, swift water, dive, confined space and trench collapse. The department's four truck companies are identified as the technical rescue companies. Truck companies are staffed with a minimum of three personnel. All uniformed personnel receive awareness-level technical rescue training. Thirty-one percent of the department's personnel are certified in one or more rescue disciplines to the technician level. The department maintains an extensive vehicle and equipment cache that is utilized to provide a contracted urban search and rescue (US&R) response within the state.

The emergency medical services (EMS) supervisor, with the rank of captain, assumes the role of safety officer upon arrival at the emergency scene. An EMS supervisor is assigned to each shift and is dispatched on all fire incidents and rescue alarms. The responsibilities for scene safety are initially filled by company officers. The safety officer is formally expected to notify the incident commander of any unsafe operations. Similar expectations extend to all emergency response personnel.

The department operates an adequate, effective, and efficient program directed toward rescuing trapped or endangered persons from any life-endangering cause.

The department describes what is expected of its members during technical rescue incidents through the use of specific management policies (MP). The policies for the program are current and reviewed on an annual basis at minimum, which ensures timely completion of program expectations.

The department's records management system has the capability to pre-identify and track required updates; however, it is not currently being used for that purpose. It is recommended that the department enhance its existing processes to more formally track and document the updating of standard operating guidelines for its technical rescue program.

The department annually appraises the effectiveness of the technical rescue training, allotted budget, personnel assignment, and performance measures of its technical rescue program. Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department utilizes the *Chief's Post Incident Review* (CPIR) to monitor the response reports for incidents meeting pre-established criteria. The department's training chief and an established technical training committee reviews the number of technical training hours to ensure rescue technicians are meeting established criteria. Recommendations resulting from the reviews are typically acted upon immediately and any necessary adjustments to operations and practices are institutionalized through changes to the management policies as appropriate.

The department's records management system (RMS) has the capability to document but limited ability to analyze the technical rescue program. It is recommended that the department obtain access to the records management system data to efficiently and effectively document and analyze the technical rescue program.

The department's response and deployment standards are based upon the metro population densities and the technical rescue demands of the community. Fourteen fire stations provide citywide coverage; department staffing is based upon station location, incident type and frequency. The targeted service level objectives in the standards of cover benchmark statements are based on industry standards and best practices, as identified earlier in this report in Category II – Assessment

and Planning. The objectives have been approved and adopted by fire department management and the director of public safety. The department's benchmark service level objectives are as follows:

For 90 percent of all technical rescue incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with minimum of two firefighters and one officer, shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first-due unit shall be capable of: establishing command; sizing up to determine if a technical rescue response is required; requesting additional resources; and providing basic life support to any victim without endangering response personnel.

For 90 percent of all technical rescue incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the effective response force (ERF), staffed with 22 firefighters and officers including the technical response team, shall be 10 minutes and 20 seconds. The ERF shall be capable of: establishing patient contact; staging and apparatus set up; providing technical expertise, knowledge, skills and abilities during technical rescue incidents; and providing first responder medical support.

The department's baseline statements reflect actual performance during 2009 to 2012. The department does not rely on the use of mutual or automatic aid from neighboring fire departments to provide its effective response force complement of personnel. These resources are immediately available as part of a seamless response system. The department's actual baseline service level performance is as follows:

For 90 percent of all technical rescue incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with minimum of two firefighters and one officer, is 8 minutes and 32 seconds. The first-due unit is capable of: establishing command; sizing up to determine if a technical rescue response is required; requesting additional resources; and providing basic life support to any victim without endangering response personnel.

For 90 percent of all technical rescue incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF, staffed with 15 firefighters and officers including the technical response team, is 13 minutes and 43 seconds. The ERF is capable of: establishing patient contact; staging and apparatus set up; providing technical expertise, knowledge, skills and abilities during technical rescue incidents; and providing first responder medical support.

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department demonstrated a trend of improvement in its actual baseline performance for 2009-2012.

The team also reviewed the available 2013 response time data and confirmed it is consistent with the provided information for 2009-2012.

<b>Technical Rescue - 90th Percentile Times – Baseline Performance</b>		<b>2009 - 2013</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Alarm Handling</b>	Pick-up to Dispatch	1:08	1:11	1:20	1:07	1:07	1:00
<b>Turnout Time</b>	Turnout Time 1st Unit	1:23	1:24	1:15	1:18	1:28	1:19
<b>Travel Time</b>	Travel Time 1st Unit <b>Distribution</b>	4:38	4:38	4:28	4:22	4:48	4:18
	Travel Time ERF <b>Concentration</b>	10:09	10:19	4:51	3:47	8:57	8:42
<b>Total Response Time</b>	Total Response Time 1st Unit On Scene <b>Distribution</b>	8:32	9:28	8:48	8:15	8:27	8:13
	Total Response Time ERF <b>Concentration</b>	13:43	13:46	7:21	7:13	11:21	12:01

#### **Criterion 5F – Hazardous Materials (Hazmat)**

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department has a comprehensive, three-tiered response approach to hazardous materials (hazmat) emergencies wherein all first-due companies are trained to the operations level, and a well-equipped, dedicated hazmat response teams provide support at the technician level. As the lead hazmat emergency response agency in the community, the fire department manages delegates and coordinates other civic emergency departments and industry resources.

The department equips all front-line engines and ladders with a small equipment cache to handle minor gas and fuel leaks. Larger hazmat responses are handled by the technician level crews. Each member of the hazmat team participates in at least 40 hours of documented hazardous materials training per year. The specially-designed hazmat response unit at station 14 is cross-staffed by crews assigned to the engine and ladder in the stations, on an as-needed basis. It is recommended that the department consider implementing a daily minimum staffing requirement for hazmat technician-level trained personnel.

The emergency medical services (EMS) supervisor, with the rank of captain, assumes the role of safety officer upon arrival at the emergency scene. An EMS supervisor is assigned to each shift and is dispatched on all fire incidents and hazmat incidents. The responsibilities for scene safety are initially filled by company officers. The safety officer is formally expected to notify the incident commander of any unsafe operations. Similar expectations extend to all emergency response personnel.

The department operates an adequate, effective, and efficient hazmat program directed toward protecting the community from the hazards associated with fires and uncontrolled releases of hazardous and toxic materials.

The department has developed management policies (MPs) to provide a central core of directives from which personnel can effectively, efficiently and safely meet the level of response for hazmat events. Management policy requires an annual review of all procedures. Program managers in coordination with personnel assigned to the hazmat team complete the initial review; senior management reviews and approves any recommended changes. There is also an emergency event type response plan, with an accompanying checklist, that is used for the deployment to hazmat events. This ensures the company officers consider all appropriate elements of hazmat response to keep responders safe while mitigating the incident.

A full appraisal is conducted annually to determine the effectiveness of the hazmat program. The department uses multiple systems to capture data for analysis that collects information including apparatus event times, incident command benchmarks and after-action reviews. Hazmat company officers and incident commanders enter information from the hazmat statistical data sheet into the department's records management system (RMS). The battalion chief in charge of hazmat and technical rescue analyzes the data received to provide performance measures that indicate the level of achievement of service level targets.

The hazmat and technical rescue battalion chief uses this information to perform annual appraisals of the hazmat program. Hazmat after-action reviews and regular hazmat training also provide ongoing and regular appraisals of the hazardous material response program.

First-due companies carry adequate supplies and materials for minor hazmat events; hazmat units are designed to carry a more comprehensive inventory of additional supplies and materials that may be called for in large events. There is also an onsite cache located at the primary hazmat station that stores absorbents, booms and a variety of other supplies with the company officers responsible for inventory control.

The department's response and deployment standards are based upon the metro population density and the hazardous materials response demands of the community. Fourteen fire stations provide citywide coverage; department staffing is based upon station location, incident type and frequency. The targeted service level objectives in the standards of cover benchmark statements are based on industry standards and best practices, as identified earlier in this report in Category II – Assessment and Planning. The objectives have been approved and adopted by fire department management and the city council. The department's benchmark service level objectives are as follows:

For 90 percent of all hazardous materials response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with minimum of two firefighters and one officer, shall be: 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first-due unit shall be capable of: establishing command; sizing up and assessing the situation to determine the presence of a potential hazardous material or explosive device; determining the need for additional resources; estimating the potential harm without intervention; and begin establishing a hot, warm and cold zone.

For 90 percent of all level II hazardous materials response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the effective response force (ERF) including the hazardous materials response team, staffed with 15 firefighters and officers. The ERF shall be capable of

providing the equipment, technical expertise, knowledge, skills and abilities to mitigate a hazardous materials incident in accordance with department standard operating guidelines.

The department's baseline statements reflect actual performance during 2009 to 2012. The department does not rely on the use of automatic aid or mutual aid from neighboring fire departments to provide its effective response force complement of personnel. These resources are immediately available as part of a seamless response system. The department's actual baseline service level performance is as follows:

For 90 percent of all hazardous materials response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of two firefighters and one officer, is: 9 minutes and 46 seconds. The first-due unit is capable of: establishing command; sizing up and assessing the situation to determine the presence of a potential hazardous material or explosive device; determining the need for additional resources; estimating the potential harm without intervention; and begin establishing a hot, warm and cold zone.

For 90 percent of all level II hazardous materials response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF, staffed with 15 firefighters and officers including the hazardous materials response team is: 14 minutes and 46 seconds. The ERF is capable of providing the equipment, technical expertise, knowledge, skills and abilities to mitigate a hazardous materials incident in accordance with department standard operating guidelines.

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department demonstrated a trend of improvement in its actual baseline performance for 2009-2012.

The team also reviewed the available 2013 response time data and confirmed it is consistent with the provided information for 2009-2012.

<b>Hazardous Materials - 90th Percentile Times – Baseline Performance</b>		<b>2009 - 2013</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Alarm Handling</b>	Pick-up to Dispatch	1:23	1:26	1:17	1:37	1:39	1:08
<b>Turnout Time</b>	Turnout Time 1st Unit	1:37	1:36	1:27	1:47	1:38	1:41
<b>Travel Time</b>	Travel Time 1st Unit <b>Distribution</b>	5:46	5:43	5:26	5:20	6:45	4:55
	Travel Time ERF <b>Concentration</b>	12:18	13:01	10:02	* <sup>1</sup>	11:47	8:36
<b>Total Response Time</b>	Total Response Time 1st Unit On Scene <b>Distribution</b>	9:46	9:50	9:31	10:27	10:26	8:24
	Total Response Time ERF <b>Concentration</b>	14:46	18:41	13:59	*	14:51	10:52

<sup>1</sup> The department did not have any qualifying responses related to hazardous materials in 2011.



### **Criterion 5G – Emergency Medical Services**

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department responds to emergency medical services (EMS) situations to provide first responder emergency medical response to the citizens of Lincoln and Lancaster County, and tiered advanced life support (ALS) response to parts of Gage, Seward, Cass, Otoe, Butler and Saunders Counties. The department's 18 front-line structural fire apparatus provide, at a minimum, first responder basic life support (BLS) emergency medical response with automatic external defibrillation (AED). Depending on paramedic availability, structural fire apparatus may be staffed with ALS capabilities. The department responds to emergency medical services incidents with a minimum of a three person truck or engine company, or a two person ALS transport capable ambulance unit. All truck companies carry extrication equipment and all structural companies carry ALS equipment. All ambulances carry advanced life support equipment and can provide patient transport.

All fire department personnel are trained as emergency medical technicians (EMT) at the basic level. All new hires are trained to the EMT-Paramedic level. The department staffs 6 ALS ambulances per 24-hour shift. Each front-line apparatus is equipped with adequate equipment, including AED, to meet the expected type and magnitude of emergency medical incidents in the community.

The EMS supervisor, with the rank of captain, assumes the role of safety officer upon arrival at the emergency scene. An EMS supervisor is assigned to each shift and is dispatched on all fire incidents and rescue alarms. The responsibilities for scene safety are initially filled by company officers. The safety officer is formally expected to notify the incident commander of any unsafe operations. Similar expectations extend to all emergency response personnel.

The department operates an emergency medical services (EMS) program that provides the community with a designated level of out-of-hospital emergency medical care. The department has developed management policies (MP) regarding EMS response activities that mirror medical protocols developed in collaboration with *Emergency Medical Services Oversight Agency* (EMSOA), an independent oversight agency created in partnership between the city of Lincoln, Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center and Brian LGH Medical Center. The department follows the protocols established by the medical director.

The department uses an electronic patient care record system. This report includes information on response time, location, type of incident and patient condition, as required by state of Nebraska regulations. EMS personnel enter information regarding evaluation, treatment and transportation.

It is recommended that the department consider the integration of a computerized patient care reporting (PCR) system with the intent of improving the quality assurance program and the inclusion of all patient care information from other responding companies.

The department has a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance program in place. All personnel have received proper training to this act. The department protects reports from public access in accordance with HIPAA. The department meets record retention requirements and maintains record schedules as required by law. Public access to patient care records have been limited based on the policy that requires a formal

request be submitted to obtain a patient care report. Each new employee is trained on this its procedures during initial EMT training and during continuing education training.

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department conducts an annual performance appraisal of its EMS operations program via quarterly quality assurance/ quality improvement document reviews, protocol compliance reviews, and analysis of turnout times, travel time and total response times as compared to the standard set in Lincoln Municipal Code 7.08.050, which requires an ambulance on scene time of eight minutes or less for 90% of all municipal responses.

Although the municipal ordinance is not contradictory to accepted benchmarks, it is stringent and prescriptive in its requirement and is not based on a community risk hazard analysis. The benchmark service level objectives incorporated into the standards of cover are based on local needs and circumstances and industry standards and best practices and should be the foundation of any changes to the program.

The department's response and deployment standards are based upon the metro population density and the medical support demands of the community. Fourteen fire stations provide citywide coverage; department staffing is based upon station location, incident type and frequency. The targeted service level objectives in the standards of cover benchmark statements are based on industry standards and best practices, as identified earlier in this report in Category II – Assessment and Planning. The objectives have been approved and adopted by fire department management and the city council. The department's benchmark service level objectives are as follows:

For 90 percent of all EMS responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of four firefighters and one officer shall be six minutes. The first-due unit shall be capable of: assessing scene safety and establishing command; sizing-up the situation; conducting an initial patient assessment; obtaining vitals and patient's medical history; initiating mitigation efforts within one minute of arrival; providing first responder medical aid including automatic external defibrillation (AED); and assisting transport personnel with packaging the patient.

For 90 percent of all EMS response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the effective response force (ERF), staffed with a minimum of four firefighters and one officer shall be eight minutes. The ERF shall be capable of: providing incident command and producing related documentation; completing patient assessment; providing appropriate treatment; performing AED; initiating cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR); and providing intravenous (IV) access-medication administration.

The department's baseline statements reflect actual performance during 2009 to 2012. The department does not rely on the use of automatic aid from neighboring fire departments to provide its effective response force complement of personnel. These resources are immediately available as part of a seamless response system. The department's actual baseline service level performance is as follows:

For 90 percent of all emergency medical services (EMS) responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of four firefighters and one officer is 8 minutes and 4 seconds. The first-due unit is capable of: assessing scene safety and establishing command; sizing-up the situation; conducting an initial patient assessment; obtaining vitals and patient's medical history; initiating mitigation efforts within one minute of arrival; providing first responder medical aid including AED; and assisting transport personnel with packaging the patient.

For 90 percent of all EMS response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF, staffed with a minimum of four firefighters and one officer is 7 minutes and 34 seconds. The ERF is capable of: providing incident command and producing related documentation; completing patient assessment; providing appropriate treatment; performing AED; initiating CPR; and providing IV access-medication administration.

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department demonstrated a trend of improvement in its actual baseline performance for 2009-2012.

The team also reviewed the available 2013 response time data and confirmed it is consistent with the provided information for 2009-2012.

<b>EMS - 90th Percentile Times – Baseline Performance</b>		<b>2009 - 2013</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Alarm Handling</b>	Pick-up to Dispatch	:47	:46	:52	:45	:46	:44
<b>Turnout Time</b>	Turnout Time 1st Unit	1:24	1:19	1:22	1:25	1:26	1:27
<b>Travel Time</b>	Travel Time 1st Unit <b>Distribution</b>	4:38	4:43	4:44	4:27	4:43	4:42
	Travel Time ERF <b>Concentration</b>	6:57	6:48	6:39	6:38	6:43	7:06
<b>Total Response Time</b>	Total Response Time 1st Unit On Scene <b>Distribution</b>	8:04	8:02	8:10	7:58	8:00	8:07
	Total Response Time ERF <b>Concentration</b>	7:34	7:43	7:25	7:27	7:36	7:55

#### **Criterion 5H – Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response**

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department is considered the lead agency for preparing the community for any significant emergency event. The department works closely with the Lancaster County Emergency Management agency providing for regional planning and response for all-hazards. All programs are contained within the county Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) and the community's hazards mitigation program.

The department operates an all-hazards preparedness program that includes a coordinated response plan designed to protect the community from terrorist threats or attacks, major disasters and other

large-scale emergencies occurring at or in the immediate area. Coordination was seen with both local businesses as well as the University of Nebraska campus. While a list of specialized responders are maintained, the department is the sole provider of hazardous materials response services within the city.

It was clear that the department covers all emergency support functions and all phases of emergency operations. This comprehensive all-hazards plan provides an appropriate multi-agency organizational structure and authorizes those agencies to carry out predetermined functions and duties. The all-hazards plan conforms to the standards reflected in the National Response Framework.

The plan is reviewed annually and updated every six months as necessary. The city conducts, at minimum an annual all-hazards exercise. All participants train and operate under the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The department has overall responsibility for the review and maintenance of the standard operating guidelines that direct the department's domestic preparedness planning and response activities. The department works closely with the Lexington county and state of Nebraska emergency manager to coordinate intelligence, response, and training protocols protecting the community from domestic emergencies. The assessment team found the operational plans coordinating with the University of Nebraska for large events to be evidence of these policies.

There is a well-equipped emergency operations center (EOC) for city use. The county and the state also operate centers in the city. To facilitate interoperability with other participants, the city operates under NIMS during these activations. The city is also host to Federal Emergency Management Agency Urban Search and Rescue Nebraska Task Force 1. This relationship allows for the department to share extraordinary interoperability with national resources for the region.

## **Category VI — Physical Resources**

The department provides service from 17 facilities which include 14 fire stations, a technical training center, a training facility, and a Municipal Services Campus (MSC). The MSC houses the vehicle maintenance and repair facility, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) maintenance shop, emergency medical services (EMS) supply, personal protective equipment (PPE) supply, training division, and serves as the indoor technical training facility. Storage for the bureau of fire prevention and the urban search and rescue (US&R) team are also located at the MSC. Administrative and support services, as well as a fire museum, are located at fire station 1.

The department maintains 14 frontline engines, four frontline trucks, 11 ambulances, one brush vehicle, one hazardous materials van, one dive rescue trailer, one technical rescue trailer, one decontamination unit, three reserve engines, one reserve aerial ladder, one command vehicle, and one EMS supervisor vehicle. Acquisition, renovation, or expansion of any fixed facilities or apparatus within the fleet occur through the city capital improvement Plan (CIP).

In 2012, the department conducted a comprehensive facilities study, the station optimization study. Presented to city leadership, elected officials, and community members, the plan was accepted and is being integrated into the CIP. The plan calls for the construction of four new stations, and the relocation of two existing stations. Currently, the department is seeking land for these infrastructure improvements

The department ensures the development and use of physical resources is consistent with its established plans. A systematic and planned approach to the future development of facilities is in place.

The station optimization study, in tandem with the published CIP, serves as the current physical facilities plan. The study was completed by fire department staff as well as city support staff. Findings were analyzed in terms of fire department service delivery and other operational goals and needs. This information was then presented to city leadership, elected officials, and the overall community for adoption as a long range facilities development plan.

The department's fixed facility resources are designed, maintained, managed and adequate to meet its goals and objectives. The department currently meets its baseline response time service level objectives. However, the current station design and deployment is slowly losing the ability to meet the needs of the city in terms of stated service level objectives. A station optimization study identifies the areas with the most urgent needs for improved service delivery; these areas are North Lincoln, South Lincoln, the Southeast corner of Lincoln, and in the West Lincoln neighborhood known as Air Park. As a result, a long term facilities development plan was selected from options provided within the station optimization study.

The plan was presented and adopted by the community, city leadership, and elected officials. Three stations were identified to be relocated and two co-located apparatus were identified as best utilized housed within two newly called for stations. Additionally, the department has developed a new station concept design that will better facilitate the expansion of resources within a given station footprint.

All physical facilities comply with the requirements of the applicable code: the International Fire Code (IFC), the International Building Code (IBC), Occupational Safety & Health Administration standards, and Environmental Protection Administration regulations. Lincoln's 14 fire stations have vehicle exhaust collection systems, separate areas for disinfecting, cleaning and storage of medical supplies, and are smoke-free facilities.

All new construction or remodeling of existing facilities complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act, in addition to all other contemporary codes and regulations. Indoor air quality is routinely tested by the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department to ensure compliance with all standards. A radon study was completed in 2010.

While the department is appropriately focused on relocating existing stations or constructing new stations to enhance response times and core service delivery, the physical resources plan should also specifically address ensuring the operational adequacy of the remaining existing stations. It is recommended that the department's physical resources plan clearly articulate priorities for ensuring operational adequacy for existing station facilities, inclusive of equitable and adequate sleeping/restroom facilities for all personnel.

The department's apparatus resources are designed and purchased to be adequate to meet its goals and objectives. The department pays close attention to maintaining the appropriate distribution and concentration of the apparatus so as to ensure a continuous capability to meet its standards of cover objectives. The department locates apparatus to maximize the distribution and concentration of resources across the city to optimize response performance. The city's maximum risk area is located in downtown Lincoln and concentration is correspondingly heavy in this area

Although the department has an apparatus replacement plan, budgetary constraints have delayed implementation resulting in an aging fleet. It is recommended the department secure financial appropriations to implement a fire apparatus replacement schedule.

The inspection, testing, preventive maintenance, replacement schedule and emergency repairs of all apparatus are well established and meet the emergency apparatus service and reliability needs.

The vehicle maintenance division is modern and well managed with clean work areas and a robust records management system capable of tracking every vehicle in the fleet. There is direct communication to and from the maintenance division to the operations division to schedule service work, based upon preventive maintenance schedules and unforeseen incidents of emergency maintenance needs. Maintenance division personnel perform routine maintenance and most major repairs. The two mechanics assigned to the maintenance facility are Emergency Vehicle Technician Program (EVTP) certified.

There is a well-stocked parts supply area at the maintenance facility. All manufacturers' recommendations are being followed and all legislation requirements are being met. The shared expectations of both the operations and maintenance division are well established in standard operating guidelines. They are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure continuity of operations and a consistent approach to keeping the fleet well maintained.. It is recommended that the department review the most recent edition of the *NFPA 1911: Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus* for possible adoption and or revisions to its current fleet policies and procedures.

The department's aging fleet requires increased service needs. The department outsources overflow maintenance workload, resulting in increased cost and extended out of service time. It is recommended the department re-evaluate the staffing model for the fleet maintenance division. Plans should be made that would allow for an adequate number of trained personnel to meet all maintenance needs.

The tools and small equipment resources are adequate and designed and maintained to meet the agency's goals and objectives. The maintenance division orders, stocks, maintain and distribute tools and small equipment for all stations and divisions in the department. The department uses computer database to track parts and inventories for the department. Apparatus and equipment maintenance performed at the stations is documented in the same database which is conducive to accurate tracking and recordkeeping. The department has required apparatus maintenance personnel to maintain EVTP certification, which has ensured qualified personnel have maintained, tested, inspected and repaired equipment. Department personnel perform routine maintenance. There is an adequate records management system for the program.

Safety equipment is adequate and designed to meet the agency's goals and objectives. The department operates a safety equipment program that distributes equipment to personnel in an effective and efficient manner. The program is supervised by a division chief and staffed by an air/equipment technician, a supply clerk and an administrative support person. A safety committee helps select appropriate gear and these recommendations are forwarded to the city Purchasing Division. In addition, safety concerns relating to equipment are tracked, and the individual bringing the concern forward is notified of the solution, and follow up actions are available to all personnel in the online records system.

## **Category VII — Human Resources**

The human resources functions for the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department are provided through the fire department and the city's legal and personnel departments. Personnel policies, labor contracts and legal personnel requirements are monitored and enforced by an assigned battalion chief officer. The department tracks recruitment, hiring, promotion and career management for all department employees.

General human resources administration practices are in place and are consistent with local and federal statutory and regulatory requirements. A human resources manager is designated as the one person responsible for all human resource activities in the department. In Lincoln, one of the battalion chiefs is assigned the duties of working with the city's human resources personnel staff, coordinating and managing all human resources activities. The battalion chief assures all policies, labor contracts and agreements related to personnel matters are enforced.

Systems are established to attract, select, retain, and promote qualified personnel in accordance with applicable local, state and federal statutory requirements.

The department has comprehensive processes to screen, qualify and test candidates for new and promoted positions. These processes are job related and comply with all local, state and federal requirements, including equal opportunity and discriminations statutes. While the department's screening processes for recruiting personnel was found in compliance with the stated requirements, the department has identified a lack of diversity in the existing workforce.

The department has a defined, supervised probationary process to evaluate new members. Recruit firefighters are considered probationary and are evaluated by their supervisors and training officers regularly through the use of performance-based evaluations that are based on their demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities. All promoted members of the department are evaluated during a similar probationary period. Supervisors report on the member's performance and recommend final completion of the probationary period.

It is recommended that a comprehensive plan be developed to help the department better represent the diversity of the city. The plan should include incumbent training, community input, and directed activities to attract and retain a more inclusive workforce. This plan should include incumbent training, community input, and directed inclusion activities to attract and retain a more inclusive workforce. In addition, it is recommended that the department develop an exit interview process to gain feedback from retiring as well as employees who voluntarily leave the department.

Personnel policies and procedures are in place, documented and used to guide both administrative and personnel behavior. The policies, procedures and rules related to human resources are available in hard-copy and electronically in all stations and department facilities. The battalion chief assigned to human resources is responsible for reviewing, updating and circulating any changes to these documents. The assessment team found all human resource related contracts and policies current and available to all employees.

Policies defining and prohibiting discrimination, or related harassment, are outlined in department policies and procedures. Department and city policies meet the minimum state and federal requirements for training in the area of personnel harassment. Personnel information is provided to

new employees at the time of hiring and any significant updates are regularly communicated to staff as they occur.

Human resources development and utilization is consistent with the agency's established mission, goals and objectives. The department has a position classification system in place whereby, on an on-going basis, assessments of job functions and job descriptions are accomplished. Audits are performed periodically and culminate in the modification of classifications, as appropriate. The battalion chief assigned to human resources works with city human resources personnel to ensure existing practices meet the needs of the department.

It is recommended that the department establish a career development program for all employees. The program should include paths for all positions explaining clearly the steps required to move from within a position and to the next level of the organization.

A system and practices for providing employee and member compensation is in place. All unionized staff wages are as a result of collective bargaining; all members are provided with documentation of the salaries and benefits derived from that process. The compensation for department staff outside of the collective bargaining agreement is aligned with comparable employees in other city departments, and is available to all employees.

Occupational health and safety and risk management programs are established and designed to protect the organization and personnel from unnecessary injuries or losses from accidents or liability.

The department has an occupational health and safety program that was designed to promote health and wellness in the workplace. Several committees, including a general safety committee and a peer review committee, help to assure all employees are educated and safety policies are enforced. A battalion chief is responsible for monitoring the activities of these committees and to communicate health and safety issues to the fire chief.

The assessment team found numerous safety policies in place intended to protect firefighters both in the fire stations and during emergencies. The team observed several emergency incident scenes where sound safety practices were being followed.

The emergency medical services (EMS) supervisor assumes the role upon arrival at all emergencies. Scene safety responsibilities are further supported through the dispatch and arrival of an additional battalion chief. All personnel expected to fill the role of safety officer have received appropriate recognized training. The safety officer is formally expected to notify the incident commander of any unsafe operations. Similar expectations extend to all emergency response personnel.

It is recommended the department begin participating in the National Firefighter Near-Miss Reporting System. While the department presented an internal near miss program, it is recommended that the department begin to participate in the national program.

The department has a wellness and fitness program for recruit and incumbent personnel and provisions for non-compliance by employees and members are written and communicated.

Each firefighter receives an initial, regular and rehabilitative medical evaluation. The annual medical evaluation includes a complete history and physical exam along with a series of tests that are in line



with industry best practices. The department requires a rehabilitative medical evaluation of members after an injury or significant illness to determine the eligibility of the member to return to full duty.

The department takes a proactive approach to physical fitness standards and all members have access to physical fitness equipment. Prospective employees must pass a physical ability test prior to being tendered a job offer.

The department has policies to guide the wellness and fitness program. The department reviews the policy annually. The training division completes the initial review; senior management reviews and approves any recommended changes. The assessment team observed the positive impact of the wellness policies. Employees have access to fitness equipment in each station and participate in the wellness and peer committees.

### **Category VIII — Training and Competency**

Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department operates a training program that is physically supported by three facilities. The training division is supervised by a battalion chief and staffed by three captains and one administrative support position. In addition, line personnel are tasked with various training assignments such as coordinating the recruit fire academy and special emphasis training. When this need occurs, these personnel are taken from their station assignment and placed on a regular 40-hour workweek. The training program ensures that all members meet relevant state and federally mandated training requirements.

A training and education program is established to support the agency's needs. The organization identifies training needs based primarily on federal and state requirements for all position qualifications throughout the organization. These requirements are clearly articulated in policy and supported by annual appraisals to identify the need to change requirements. In addition, the department uses training based on Post Incident Reviews (PIR) to identify the need for reinforcing concepts or training on deficiencies. Finally, department members can identify training needs by utilizing a formal process to bring this information to the attention of command staff.

Training and education programs are provided to support the agency's needs. The training program is well organized and meets the needs of the department and its members; it also meets the state certification requirements. All members of the department meet the Firefighter Level II requirements of *National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications* prior to the end of initial recruit training. Specialized training and fire suppression training is focused on the needs of the department. The training division monitors mandatory training and certification levels for personnel in all divisions. Updates are provided to chief officers to identify the training needs for department personnel.

The department utilizes job performance requirement (JPR) sheets to evaluate members on an individual basis; these items are included in regular personnel evaluations. In addition, task-books have been developed that must be completed by members prior to being eligible for promotion. Battalion chiefs conduct multi-company and company based evolutions on an as-needed basis. It is recommended that the department develop a more robust company and multi-company, performance based evaluation program. Currently, battalion chiefs conduct these evaluations on an as needed basis but this is not outlined in policy. In particular, it would be helpful to use to evaluate the outcome of delivered training programs.

Training and education resources, printed and non-printed library materials, media equipment, facilities and staff are available in sufficient quantity, relevancy, diversity and they are current. The department has access to three training facilities which are geographically dispersed throughout the city. In addition, the department has recently implemented a videoconferencing system that enables training to be delivered while keeping units in their station areas. The department's newest facility is currently under development and will include an indoor facility large enough for ladder deployment and various other training evolutions.

The department's main burn house was built in the 1960s and is limited in size. The department has access to a burn house at the local community college, but this facility is shared and cannot provide Class A fires. In addition, the department owned training tower has been decommissioned for high-angle training and is therefore limited in use. It is recommended that the department evaluate the long-term needs for a dedicated burn building capable of conducting live burns using Class A fuels, designed to accommodate the needs of a growing organization.

The training division uses nationally recognized training materials that are based on NFPA standards. These materials are current and are evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure that they reflect current practices.

## **Category IX — Essential Resources**

### **Criterion 9A – Water Supply**

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department primarily relies on the city's water department to ensure the provision of a well-maintained, reliable and adequate water system. A solid working relationship exists between the two entities and includes the regular exchange of information to identify areas where the water supply system can be improved.

The water supply resources available to the department are reliable and capable of distributing adequate volumes of water and pressures to all areas of agency responsibility. All areas meet fire flow requirements for emergencies.

The bureau of fire prevention and the Lincoln Water Department verify the adequacy and arrangement of water supply for firefighting purposes for every structure within the city of Lincoln. The bureau reviews the minimum flow on plans of each significant new construction development. The fire flow is based on total square footage, type of construction and whether a fire sprinkler system is present. The bureau's plan review section coordinates with the water department to verify fire flow demands for new projects or proposed subdivisions. Plans are verified and approved by the water department prior to granting the required permits.

Virtually all built up areas of the city are adequately served by the domestic water supply. The distribution system and hydrant distances are meeting best practices of 420-foot intervals for single family residential areas. In commercial or industrial areas, along arterial streets or in other high-risk areas, the fire department requires additional hydrants be installed to provide adequate fire protection.

The hydrant locations and alternate water sources are maintained in both hard-copy and electronic format. Responding crews have on-board mobile data computers to access the information through the department's records management system. There is an appropriate system in place for the sharing of information between the fire department and the water department related to any problems that

develop with the pressurized water system. The water department performs hydraulic analysis to verify the area grid's ability to support the necessary fire flow and duration.

Should the domestic water supply be rendered inoperable or for operations in non-hydrant protected areas, the fire department has current mutual aid agreements in place with surrounding departments for use of water tankers to support operations.

### **Criterion 9B – Communication Systems**

Dispatching and communications are provided by the emergency communications center under the management and supervision of the public safety director. Technical direction is provided to the emergency communications center through a user's group of representatives from the primary jurisdiction's fire rescue and law enforcement agency.

The emergency dispatch center currently employs sufficient emergency dispatchers including several full time positions designated for fire dispatch. The emergency communications center is a quality facility with contemporary and appropriate equipment. Equipment is properly maintained and dispatchers are appropriately trained. The center has multiple redundant communications and power back up systems including a standalone and off site secondary dispatch facility which is tested quarterly. The center is Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc (CALEA) re-accredited as of June of 2011, and also is considered a flagship agency.

The public and the department have an adequate, effective and efficient emergency communications system. The system is reliable and able to meet the demands of major operations, including command and control within fire and rescue services during emergency operations, and meets the requirements of other public safety agencies having a need for the distribution of information.

The city of Lincoln and Lancaster County operate on an 800 MHz digital trunked communications system. In each of the 14 fire stations, a fixed 800 MHz communications system is in place for the purposes of notification by dispatch for units to respond, emergency system status, and general announcements which affect the response of emergency units. Dispatch can isolate these individual stations for select communications if necessary.

Each emergency response vehicle contains at least one mobile 800 MHz digital mobile radio for voice communication. The mobile radio ensures clear and concise communication with dispatch as well as other emergency responders. Mobile data computers are installed on all fire apparatus. A wireless modem is provided for each emergency response apparatus to support the data transactions of the mobile data computers.

The wireless modems also serve as hotspot connections to the emergency medical services reporting network and automatic vehicle locator services. The department assigns portable radios to every riding position on first line apparatus, all command staff personnel, and other specialty assignments. All operations personnel are also assigned a lapel microphone to increase effective incident communications. All apparatus and staff positions have been issued cell phones for backup communications.

In addition to the trunked system, the radios are capable of working mobile to mobile in the event the repeater system fails. The radios can also work off of redundant or an emergency portable communication repeater system.

The emergency communications center maintains a 477-page operations manual delineating all communications center policies and procedures with the inclusion of standard operating procedures for all types of dispatching services. Dispatchers are trained in emergency medical dispatcher (EMD) as well as priority dispatch protocols. The team observed the operations manual available at all dispatching stations both in the primary facility as well as the backup center. The team confirmed that knowledge of and adherence to the standard operating procedures is included in dispatcher training as well as dispatcher performance reviews.

### **Criterion 9C – Administrative Support Services and Office Systems**

The fire department provides most of its own administrative services via civilian personnel, but does access some support from the city and the University of Nebraska for information technology projects. Additionally, the administrative staff is occasionally augmented by emergency services personnel temporarily reassigned to fulfill a project assignment.

High school or college student interns, senior volunteers, and representatives from local, regional and national organizations are also utilized for various projects and programs as support staff. Two years ago, the department underwent an organizational restructuring which assigned command level staff to administrative roles, utilizing an administrative schedule. As a result of this reorganization, a significant, and appropriate, amount of full-time administrative support was incorporated into the framework of the department.

Administrative support services and general office systems are in place with adequate staff to efficiently and effectively conduct and manage the department's administrative functions, such as organizational planning and assessment, resource coordination, data analysis, research, records keeping, reporting, business communications, public interaction and purchasing.

In 2012, the department underwent a significant organizational change due, in large part, to the growing need for additional administrative capacity. The reorganization put all chief level officers on a 40 hour per work week, assigned to the administration offices. Most administrative duties, then, were assigned based upon the expertise of each individual chief. In addition to the ten chief officers now working in administrative capacities, several civilian support staff works in the administration offices.

An account clerk, an accountant, a delivery clerk, an executive secretary, a fire analyst/programmer, a geographic information system analyst, an office operations specialist, and a senior office assistant provide support to the administrative division. These staff members are a strong resource to the various functions and divisions of the fire department and play a large part in the process of continuous improvement.

### **Category X — External Systems Relationships**

The Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department used the department's strategic planning process to determine the path it should take to maintain and establish their commitment to all external relationships. For example, the department's technical rescue team was recognized as a strategic asset for the region and thus operates as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue Team Nebraska Task Force I. The department has established other strong relationships in the areas of emergency medical control and technical education and training. The

department's has established agreements which offer their emergency medical services outside of the Lincoln corporate limits.

The department's operations and planning efforts include relationships with external agencies and operational systems that affect or may influence its mission, operations or cost effectiveness.

The department understands and supports the need to integrate their resources across jurisdictional boundaries and provide special response capabilities to other jurisdictions and regions. Lincoln uses their strategic planning process to support and identify these relationships. Chief officers are assigned specific relationships which the department supports so that constant lines of communications are maintained with all partners. Examples of these external relationships include local educational institutions, health care facilities, the state of Nebraska, and FEMA.

By developing and maintaining the external agreements listed above the department has ensured that it has reached out to those local partners who have a vested interest and the capability to assist the department in meeting their goals. It also suggests that the department is capable of sustaining a heightened degree of preparedness allowing it to respond with resources adequate to provide services should a major incident take place.

The department has well-developed and functioning external agency agreements. The system is synergistic and is taking advantage of all operational and cost effective benefits that may be derived from external agency agreements.

The peer assessment team was able to verify that the department reviews all agreements on an annual basis. Some of these agreements are tied to federal grant funding while others are specifically driven by the department's strategic plan. The annual review also ensures that the agreements support evolving objectives of both the department and the city. Because the department's agreements are driven and vetted through the strategic planning process, the agreements help to address the department's organizational objectives.

The department maintains agreements with local rural fire departments, the airport authority as well as local medical facilities and educational institutions. All of these agreements are assigned to a chief officer for review and monitoring. It was observed that when the strategic plan identifies a need for an updated agreement, the process allows for adoption and compliance. It is recommended that the department initiate a process to review, renew and revise their external mutual aid agreements with neighboring agencies.

ORGANIZATION CHART

